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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

DEC 20 1957

MEMORANDUM

DECLASSIFIED
XND 901113
Authority
By HR-M/SG
8/19/91

TO: G - Mr. Mutt
FROM: EUR - F. W. Jandrey
SUBJECT: Policy in Connection with Possible Substitution of East German
for Soviet Personnel at Berlin Military Train Checkpoint

In 1954 the United States, British, and French Governments approved a paper prepared by the Allied High Commission in Bonn setting forth agreed policy on problems arising from the Soviet declaration on the "sovereignty" of the GDR (HICOM/P(54)5, Revised Final, August 23, 1954). This paper contemplated, in the event of the substitution of East German for Soviet personnel at the checkpoints for Allied military trains to and from Berlin and on the Berlin-Helmstedt Autobahn, that, rather than have the trains or Autobahn travelers turn back, it would be acceptable for them to show to the East German officials upon demand the travel documentation normally carried by all Allied travelers to and from Berlin for presentation at the checkpoints. (This action would be taken only after demands to see a Soviet officer had been unavailing.) At the same time, the Allies would demand an explanation from the Soviets and, if necessary, make a declaration to them that they considered the East German personnel as acting in the capacity of agents of the Soviets, whom the Allies would continue to hold responsible for the unhindered passage through the checkpoints of Allied travelers to and from Berlin. This procedure was believed preferable to allowing ourselves to be drawn into a situation where all Allied travel to and from Berlin by road and rail would come to a halt, putting us in effect in the position of a "self-imposed blockade."

The above policy has been reaffirmed on various occasions, notably in a State-Defense message to Bonn December 27, 1955 (DEPTEL 1736). The three Allied Embassies in Bonn are now in the final stages of drafting a new policy paper on travel in and through the Soviet Zone which restates the same policy.

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-2-

On November 29, 1957 the Commander-in-Chief of USAREUR, on the basis of "intelligence reports" which were not further described, recommended a review of this matter to determine whether an effort should not be made to reopen this question with a view to obtaining tripartite agreement to a policy of initially turning back the trains (presumably for a few days) rather than showing Allied travel documentation to East German personnel (Bonn's 1920, December 17, 1957). On December 3 the Embassy replied to USAREUR that, while there might be some advantage in initially turning back the trains to test the determination of the Soviets to replace Soviet with East German control personnel in the face of strong Allied reaction, the possibility seemed greater that the Soviets would not hand over control of the checkpoints to the East Germans except as a result of a policy decision from which their retreat would be improbable. The Embassy referred to the established tripartite policy and cited certain of the arguments in support of it (Bonn's 1919, December 17, 1957). On December 17, 1957 Ambassador Bruce brought the matter to the Department's attention (Bonn's 1923) and, although recognizing there is some difference of opinion within the Embassy, recommended that serious consideration be given to revising existing policy to provide for turning the trains back initially rather than accepting East German controls. Ambassador Bruce added that, if this change was to be proposed to the British and French, it should be done at a Governmental level since in his view discussion with the British and French Embassies at Bonn would be unavailing.

Recommendation

It is recommended that you sign the attached reply to the Embassy at Bonn which indicates that the Department does not believe that there have been any new developments which warrant changing the decision taken in 1954, but that it sees no objection to Ambassador Bruce's raising this matter with his colleagues if he wishes.

The draft telegram has been cleared with the Department of Defense.

Concurrence

GER - Mr. Reinstein
luk

Attachment:

Telegram to Bonn.

EUR:GER:GPA:TDMcKiernan:erk
12/20/57 *TDM-K*

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INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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Control: 10188

Rec'd: DECEMBER 17, 1957
1:58 P.M.

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Action

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FROM: BONN

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 1920, DECEMBER 17, 6 PM.

PRIORITY.

SENT BONN RPTD INFO USCINCEUR USCOB BERLIN SX 7359.

SX 7350.

1. RECENT INTELLIGENCE REPORTS ON GDR-SOVIET RELATIONS HEIGHTEN THE POSSIBILITY OF GDR OFFICIALS REPLACING SOVIETS AT ZONAL ROAD AND RAIL CHECKPOINTS.

2. CURRENT INSTRUCTIONS TO TRAIN COMMANDERS IN EVENT THIS HAPPENS ARE:

A. THE MILITARY TRAIN COMMANDER WILL DECLARE TO THE GDR OFFICIAL THAT THE TRAIN IS A MILITARY TRAIN AND DEMAND TRANSIT THROUGH THE SOVIET ZONE AS A MATTER OF RIGHT.

B. IF THE GDR OFFICIAL REFUSES TO LET THE TRAIN PASS AND DEMANDS DOCUMENTATION, THE TRAIN COMMANDER WILL ASK HIM TO PRODUCE A SOVIET OFFICER TO WHOM NORMAL DOCUMENTATION WILL BE SHOWN.

C. IF BOTH PASSAGE WITHOUT DOCUMENTATION AND A DEMAND TO SEE A SOVIET OFFICER ARE REFUSED, THE TRAIN COMMANDER WILL SHOW THE GDR OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PASSENGERS ON THE TRAIN, BUT WITHOUT PRODUCING IDENTITY DOCUMENTS OR GIVING ANY NAMES.

D. (1) IF PASSAGE IS STILL REFUSED, THE TRAIN COMMANDER WILL, UNDER ORAL PROTEST, SHOW TO GDR OFFICIAL IDENTITY DOCUMENTS AND MOVEMENT ORDERS (IF NECESSARY) OF ALL PASSENGERS.

(2) IF ANY

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-2- 1920, DECEMBER 17, 6 PM., FROM BONN.

(2) IF ANY OF THE EVENTS DESCRIBED IN THESE SUB PARAGRAPHS A THROUGH D OCCUR, OR IF FOR ANY REASON THE GDR OFFICIAL REFUSES TO PERMIT THE TRAIN TO PROCEED, A RADIO REPORT TO HQ USAREUR AND HQ USCIB WILL BE MADE. THE TRAIN COMMANDER WILL ADVISE THE GDR OFFICIAL THAT HE HAS REPORTED THE FACTS TO HQ USAREUR AND WILL RETURN THE TRAIN TO HELMSTEDT OR BERLIN, AS THE CASE MAY BE, ONLY ON ORDER OF HQ USAREUR.

3. PARALLEL INSTRUCTIONS APPLY TO AUTOBAHN TRAVEL BY PRIVATE VEHICLES.

4. THESE INSTRUCTIONS APPARENTLY ARE BASED ON TRIPARTITELY AGREED POLICY DIRECTIVES (HICOM/P(54)5).

5. CURRENT PROCEDURE IN EFFECT WOULD ACCEPT GDR CLEARANCE OF TRAINS UNDER PROTEST. THE QUESTION ARISES WHETHER THIS PROCEDURE WOULD BE EFFECTIVE IN THE LIGHT OF EXPERIENCE. AS AN ALTERNATIVE, INITIAL DEMAND FOR A SOVIET OFFICER, AND, IF THIS IS REFUSED, A DEMAND THAT THE TRAIN BE RETURNED TO POINT OF ORIGIN, WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE FAR MORE IMPACT.

6. RECOMMEND REVIEW OF THIS MATTER TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT A US EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE ON EMBASSY LEVEL TO SECURE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT TO A STRONGER PROCEDURE, TO INCLUDE INITIAL TURNING BACK OF TRAINS RATHER THAN DEALING WITH EAST GERMAN AUTHORITIES.

BRUCE

DHP

NOTE: Mr. Lisle's office (GER) notified 12/17/4:35 pm JAW

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OUTGOING TELEGRAM

INDICATE: ☐ COLLECT
☐ CHARGE TO

Department of State

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11306
December 27, 1955
6:27 p.m.

SENT TO: Amembassy BONN PRIORITY 1736
USCINCEUR PARIS PRIORITY

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Origin

EUR

Index

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RPTD INFO: USBER BERLIN 324
Amembassy MOSCOW 744
USAREUR HEIDELBERG
Amembassy PARIS 2396
Amembassy LONDON (By Pouch)

Refs: (A) Bonn's 2098 rptd Berlin 263
(B) Bonn's 2097 rptd Berlin 262 Moscow 111
(C) Bonn's 1774 rptd Berlin 213 Moscow 90
Pouched Warsaw London Paris

State-Defense message.

Following are State-Defense views on various problems
re Berlin recognized travel discussed reftels:

1. Note with interest measures in process re vehicle
license plates (ref A) and will await report outcome your
discussions with USAREUR.

2. Recognize introduction uniform system travel orders
for military and civilian personnel would present practical
difficulties as indicated ref B but suggest Embassy consider
in conjunction with appropriate military authorities advisa-
bility taking steps to standardize form all orders for Berlin
travel as much as possible and to minimize any formal differences
in appearance between military and civilian orders which may
now exist. Believe would be advisable issue Berlin travel
orders in name Ambassador for all personnel traveling on non-
military orders and add phrase identifying traveler as official
of US (or British French) Government on official business connected

Drafted by:

eur:GER:CPA:RCCreel:es 12/27/55

Telegraphic transmission and

classification approved by:

Jacob D. Beam

Clearance:

Defense - General Fox

GER - Mr. Reinstein

L/GER - Mr. Raymond

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with occupation of Berlin. Pushkin was officially notified May 6 (Bonn's 3441, May 7) that Ambassadors succeeded, in matters of common concern, to authority and responsibility of High Commissioners as successors to Military Governors. Ambassadors therefore proper authority to identify such personnel and issue such orders.

3. Agree that any Soviet attempt impose requirement that Soviet or GDR visas be obtained as authorization for Allied official travel to and from Berlin (para 1A ref C) would involve clear violation Allied rights. Believe that rather than submit to such requirement, whether or not it limited to civilian personnel, three Allies should suspend recognized travel affected in favor of travel by air pending decision by governments as to further action to be taken in light of all circumstances then existing.

4. In event Soviet personnel should be replaced at recognized checkpoints by Volkspolizei (para 1B ref C) believe that in absence actual interference with Berlin access Allied recognized travel by road or rail should not be given up merely to avoid Volkspolizei checking and stamping of Allied documentation on same basis as Soviet personnel now operate. At same time believe three Ambassadors should react promptly to development in question with message to Pushkin to effect Allies will (subject Department's concurrence at time) continue hold Soviets responsible for continued maintenance free access to Berlin on basis existing agreements and specifically that Soviets will be held responsible for any acts of individuals under Soviet control which in any way affect continued free access. It does not appear important whether Soviets actually accept or reject this theory so long as we enunciate it clearly.

5. Request USCINCEUR designate appropriate military representative to carry on with Embassy discussions envisaged under para 2 above.

Note: Pouched by DC/T

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